

Proceedings of the Milton Society of America

Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel, Philadelphia
December 28, 2006

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The officers and Executive Committee met in a preliminary session at 4:00 PM at the Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel. Present were Laura L. Knoppers (President), Paul Stevens (Vice President), Labriola (Secretary), Diana Treviño Benet (Treasurer) and the following members of the Executive Committee: Margaret Arnold, Mary Fenton, and Thomas Luxon. Excused were Gardner Campbell, Angelica Duran, and Gregory Machacek.

1. OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The following members of the society were nominated for offices: Paul Stevens for President; Kristin Pruitt for Vice President; and William Shullenberger and Nicholas von Maltzahn for three-year membership (2007-2009) on the Executive Committee, succeeding Gardner Campbell and Angelica Duran.

2. TREASURER'S REPORT. Benet indicated that the assets and net worth of the society as of July 1, 2006, were \$11,900.00. Benet and Labriola stressed the importance of donations and space advertisements as sources of revenue in order to stabilize the cost of the annual dinner at \$55.00. Benet will monitor the added revenues and report whether they are adequate to cover the mounting costs of the dinner and the increased expenses of printing the booklet, postage, and the like.

3. COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARLY AWARDS. All officers and members of the Executive Committee are urged to be in contact with Benet to nominate Miltonists to serve on the committee. The chair of the Committee on Scholarly Awards will be David Loewenstein.

4. SECRETARY'S REPORT. Labriola indicated that his announcements are printed on pages 7-10 of the annual booklet. He announced the names of

the members of the society who are recently deceased: Margaret Byard, Harrison T. Meserole, Kenneth Hovey, William B. Hunter, James D. Simmonds.

Labriola announced a new award that will be presented by the Milton Society of America: The John T. Shawcross Award. This award will recognize a distinguished edition, bibliography, reference work, or a distinguished chapter on Milton in a monograph that covers other authors or engages topics that bear on seventeenth-century England. He also stressed the importance of space advertisements in the annual booklet.

Thomas Luxon reported on Milton's Cottage, his recent visit there, and the importance of Miltonists becoming "Friends of Milton's Cottage." To that end, he distributed brochures that provided more detailed information.

5. OPEN MEETINGS AT MLA 2007 in Chicago. The following open meetings, each 75 minutes long, were approved:

- A. "John Milton: A General Session," with Paul Stevens presiding;
- B. "John Milton: Land, Space, Place," with Mary Fenton presiding;

NOTE THE FOLLOWING RULES FOR THE ABOVE-MENTIONED MEETINGS:

A. The chairs should have a 1-page detailed proposal sent by e-mail not later than 15 March. Usually three papers are chosen, and the chair may appoint a respondent; or two longer papers may be selected, with or without a respondent; or a panel discussion might be organized. It is essential, however, to provide time for questions and comments by attendees.

B. The chairs must submit the names of participants, academic affiliations, and titles of presentations to Labriola no later than April 1st (Labriola@duq.edu).

C. Labriola will place an announcement concerning the open meetings in the upcoming *MLA Newsletter*; Benet will also include notice in her upcoming letter to all members; and the chairs of the open meetings are urged to publicize in other ways.

D. All presenters must be members of MLA. If not, they must join by April 1st unless their specialty is something other than language and literature, in which cases they must seek, through Labriola, special permission for their participation from the MLA Executive Director.

E. Chairs are encouraged to be in contact with each other to be sure that they are not considering duplicate papers and to call attention to papers that may seem more suitable for the other's open meeting.

6. The officers and Executive Committee deliberated on the possibility of a special program for the dinner and meeting in 2008, which is the 60th anniversary of the Milton Society (1948-2008) and the quartercentenary of Milton's birth (1608-2008). Options considered were the following: inviting a creative writer to be the principal speaker, inviting a panel of Honored Scholars of the society who would address in conversational manner the changing critical perspectives on Milton, inviting a speaker to recount the history of the Milton Society, preferably someone who attended the first meeting in 1948, inviting a speaker from outside the field of literary studies, perhaps someone in government, who would provide an innovative outlook on Milton.

Approximately 80 members and guests attended the dinner and meeting at which Knoppers presided.

1. The nominees for office (see item 1 above) were elected by acclamation.

2. Labriola announced the two open meetings at MLA 2007 (see item 5 above).

3. The James Holly Hanford Award for a distinguished book recognized the excellence of William Poole's *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge UP, 2005). The James Holly Hanford Award for a distinguished essay recognized the excellence of Joanna Picciotto's "Reforming the Garden: The Experimentalist Eden and *Paradise Lost*," *ELH*, 72.1 (Spring 2005), 23-78.

4. The Irene Samuel Memorial Award recognized the excellence of the following multiauthor collection, *Milton's Legacy*, ed. Kristin A. Pruitt and Charles W. Durham (Susquehanna UP, 2005).

5. The featured address, "Late Milton: Nationalist or Patriot?," was given by David Loewenstein.

6. Thomas Corns, Professor of English & Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning), University of Wales, Bangor, cited David Loewenstein, Marjorie and Lorin Tiefenthaler Professor of English, University of Wisconsin-Madison, as Honored Scholar 2006.

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At the executive session after the general business meeting, the following were present: Stevens (President), Pruitt (Vice President), Labriola (Secretary), Benet (Treasurer), and the following members of the Executive Committee: Arnold, Fenton, and von Maltzahn.

1. Labriola and Benet were reappointed Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

2. Benet was empowered to choose a site for the 2007 dinner and meeting in Chicago.

3. Robert T. Fallon was the nominee for Honored Scholar of 2007.